



CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH PROBABLE OR CONFIRMED COVID-19

Purpose: This document provides supportive guidance for those caring for someone with COVID-19 (or recognized as a probable case by Public Health) in one place and in more detail than in the source documents linked below.

This guidance is not intended to replace direction from your Public Health Unit who may provide very specific instructions related to the care of the person you are looking after.

Caring for someone with COVID-19 will require monitoring theirs and your symptoms can be difficult. This guidance is not meant to provide medical advice. Please consult your local Public Health Unit, call Telehealth: 1 888 797 000 and/or refer to the [Ministry of Health Online Self-Assessment](#).

Source Documents:

Excellent, general guidance to aid in caring for children in this circumstance, including how to monitor for symptoms, is found here:

[How to Care for a Child at Home with COVID-19: Advice for Caregivers, Government of Canada](#)

Concise advice for group homes and co-living situations may be found here:

[COVID-19 Guidance: Group Homes and Co-Living Settings, Ministry of Health](#)

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Try to limit caregiving to one healthy person providing care to the person(s) with COVID-19 to reduce transmission;
- People who are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 should not care for someone with COVID-19 (elderly persons, those with chronic medical conditions like heart disease or diabetes, those with a compromised immune system);
- If possible, the person with COVID-19 should stay in a separate room away from other people in your home;
- Use a separate bathroom from the ill person if possible (if not possible, see section **When Sharing a Bathroom** for more details);
- Do not share personal items with the ill person such as towels, bed linen, dishes, utensils, drinking glasses/containers, cigarettes/e-cigarettes, or electronic devices;
- Do not share a bed.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Maintain a 2 metres distance (6 feet) from the person you are caring for;
- If you need to be within 2 metres (6 feet) of the person with COVID, wear a face mask, disposable gloves and eye protection;
- It is not possible to maintain social distancing when caring for an infant, toddler or young child who are infected and for this reason, it is important to follow precautions. See ***Caring for an Infant, Toddler, or Young Child***.
- Wear disposable gloves when touching the person with COVID-19, their environment and soiled items or surfaces;
- Do not re-use face masks or gloves;
- Clean your hands often for at least 20 seconds, especially after contact with the person with COVID and after removing gloves, face masks and eye protection.

WASHING YOUR HANDS

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Wash your hands with soap and water after each contact with the infected person.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Dry your hands with disposable paper towels.
- If not available, use a reusable towel and replace it when it becomes wet.

IF SHARING LIVING SPACE (IF THE PERSON WITH COVID-19 CANNOT BE ISOLATED IN SEPARATE ROOM)

- The person who has COVID-19 is to remain isolated in the home and is not to leave until cleared to leave quarantine by Public Health;
- No visitors are permitted unless they are essential (e.g. care provider, medical personnel)
- Make sure that shared rooms have good airflow and where possible, keep windows open;
- If not possible to isolate the person with COVID-19 in separate room, then ensure they practice physical distancing, and maintain a distance of at least two metres (6 feet) from others at all times;
- When in the same area e.g. the same room, as someone, they should wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth;
- If the person with COVID-19 person cannot wear a mask, anyone else near to them should wear a mask when they are in the same room as the person with COVID.).

WHEN PROVIDING DIRECT PHYSICAL CARE

- Wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when you are providing direct personal care: a surgical/procedural mask, face shield, gown and gloves when the care you are providing requires you to be in close contact with the person with COVID;
- Wear mask and gloves when you have contact with the person's saliva or other body fluids (e.g. blood, sweat, saliva, vomit, urine and feces) e.g. when doing laundry.

USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

PPE Safety Tips-Print out

- Remove PPE in the following order:
 - remove gloves, remove gown,
 - wash your hands (important to wash them before removing your eye protection or mask);
 - remove eye protection,
 - Remove your mask by only holding the ear loops or ties—do not touch the front of the mask that was over your face.
 - and wash your hands.
- Place used face masks, gloves and other contaminated items in a garbage container lined with a garbage bag,
- Tie up the garbage bag and dispose of it with other household waste. (For managing possibly contaminated laundry, see specific section on Laundry).
- Use a cleaner or disinfectant to clean your eye protection. Follow the product instructions.
- Wash your hands again with soap and water.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT CLEANING

- Keeping surfaces clean is a good way to help stop COVID-19 from spreading;
- In most cases, COVID-19 is 'killed' or removed with soap and water;
- At least once daily clean and disinfect surfaces that people touch often, such as toilets, laundry containers, light switches, bedside tables, doorknobs, phones and television remotes; fridge handles;
- Use only approved hard-surface disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN). A DIN is an 8-digit number given by Health Canada that confirms the disinfectant product is approved and safe for use in Canada.
- Electronic devices (e.g., keyboards, touch screens) may be disinfected with 70% alcohol (e.g., alcohol prep wipes) at least daily.
- If approved hard surface disinfectants are not available, a diluted bleach solution can be prepared by following the instructions on the label, or in a ratio of 5 millilitres (mL) of (5%) bleach per 250 mL of water OR 20 mL of (5%) bleach per litre of water;
- If using 'flushable wipes' do not flush them. They will cause blockage in your plumbing.

WHEN SHARING A BATHROOM

If not possible to have a separate bathroom for the person with COVID-19 then extra care must be taken:

- The toilet lid should be closed before flushing to limit toilet splash in case this is a way the virus is spread;
- Consider keeping your toothbrush in another room or stored in a closed cupboard;
- Use separate soap dispenser;
- Use paper hand towels and discard in a lined garbage container;
- If paper hand towels are not available, use a reusable towel and replace it when it becomes wet;
- Disinfect bathroom (toilet flush button or handle; sink; and tap, door handle, area around the sink, light switch) after each use;

WHEN WASHING DISHES

- All dishes and utensils used by the person with COVID must be washed with soap or detergent in warm water. No special soap is needed;
- Dishwashers can be used.

WHEN DOING LAUNDRY

- Washing machines may be used;
- Wear gloves;
- Place possibly contaminated laundry into a container with a plastic liner and do not shake and do not hold it against your body;
- If using another laundry basket, sanitize the basket after removing possibly contaminated laundry; do not place clean laundry in same laundry basket;
- Consider adding washable plush toys to the laundry (as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions);
- Wash laundry with regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C);
- Wash your hands well after handling laundry and if wearing gloves, after you've removed the gloves and dispose of the gloves as recommended;
- Dry laundry well;
- Clothing, blankets and sheets belonging to the person with COVID can be washed with other laundry.

SUPPLIES YOU WILL NEED

- Face masks (do not re-use)
- Eye protection (face shield or goggles) for use by caregiver
- Disposable gloves (do not re-use) for use by caregiver
- Disposable paper towels
- Tissue
- Waste container with plastic liner (or use garbage bag as liner)
- Thermometer
- Over the counter medication to reduce fever (e.g. ibuprofen or acetaminophen)
- Running water
- Hand soap
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol
- Dish soap
- Regular laundry soap
- Regular household cleaning products
- One-step cleaner/disinfectant
- Hard surface disinfectant, or if not available, concentrated (5%) liquid bleach and a separate container for dilution
- Alcohol prep wipes
- Garbage bags

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